

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 00628 211723Z

15

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SCCT-01 EB-07 SY-05 USSS-00 /070 W

----- 078765

R 211300Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2932

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 0628

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PORS MILI CO

SUBJ: LATEST KIDNAPPING LEADS TO REVELATION OF POSSIBLE BUERRILLA
GAINS

REF: A. BOGOTA DAO 152020Z JAN, B. BOGOTA DAO 161730Z JAN,
C. BOGOTA 3340, 1975.

1. ON JAN 14 RURAL GUERRILLAS SEIZED THE TOWN OF URIBE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF META AND KIDNAPPED ONE FRED ARCHIBALD, A COLOMBIAN EMPLOYEE OF INTERCOL (ESSO). EARLY NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS REPORTED THAT THE GUERRILLAS NUMBERED 200 AND WERE MEMBERS OF THE COLOMBIAN REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES (FARC).

2. PROMPTED BY THE INCIDENT, COLOMBIAN GENERAL LOMBANA, CHIEF JOINT STAFF, MET WITH USMILGRP COMMANDER ON JAN 15 AND 16 TO REQUEST U.S. RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS OVER COLOMBIA USING INFRARED SCANNER EQUIPMENT AND TO ASK THAT CINCSOUTH ALSO PROVIDE EXTRA SENSITIVE INFRARED FILM FOR USE BY COLOMBIAN UNITS TO LOCATE THE GUERRILLAS INVOLVED IN THE KIDNAPPING (REFS A AND B). GENERAL LOMBANA EMPHASIZED THE URGENCY OF THE REQUESTS AND ASKED THAT THEY BE CLOSELY HELD. ACCORDING TO GENERAL LOMBANA, BECAUSE OF ARCHIBALD'S ACCENTED SPANISH, HIS LAST NAME, AND HIS EMPLOYMENT WITH A U.S. COMPANY, HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A MISTAKEN VICTIM OF AN ATTEMPT TO KIDNAP A U.S. EMPLOYEE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 00628 211723Z

3. FOR POLITICAL AND POSSIBLY LEGAL REASONS USMILGRP COMMANDER, WITH CONCURRENCE OF AMBASSADOR, DID NOT RECOMMEND RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS BUT DID ASK THAT REQUEST FOR FILM BE HONORED. A U.S. TECHNICIAN WITH FILM ARRIVED ON JAN 16 AND PHOTO FLIGHTS BEGAN ON JAN 18. RESULTS ARE SO FAR UNKNOWN.

4. MEANWHILE, ON JAN 17 INTERCOL NEGOTIATED WITH THE GUERRILLAS AND OBTAINED THE RELEASE OF ARCHIBALD IN EXCHANGE FOR THREE MILLION PESOS RANSOM. IN A FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW, ARCHIBALD STATED THAT HE WAS WELL TREATED, THEN REVEALED CERTAIN OBSERVATIONS MADE WHILE IN CAPTIVITY. HE SAID THAT HE SAW APPROXIMATELY 800 UNIFORMED GUERRILLAS CARRYING SPRINGFIELD RIFLES, PISTOLS AND PACKS. MOST OF THE GUERRILLAS, HE OBSERVED, WERE YOUNG, MANY WERE WELL-EDUCATED, AND IT APPEARED THAT MANY AREAS OF THE COUNTRY WERE REPRESENTED, INDICATING THAT THIS WAS NOT A SIMPLE LOCAL OPERATION. ARCHIBALD SAID THAT HE WAS TOLD BY THE GUERRILLAS THAT THEY WERE COMMUNISTS, WITHOUT REVEALING PARTICULAR AFFILIATION, AND THAT THEY WERE THE SAME PEOPLE WHO RAIDED THE TOWN OF PUERTO RICO IN APRIL 1975 (REF C). ARCHIBALD ADDED THAT THE GUERRILLAS ALSO SAID THAT THEY NEEDED THE RANSOM MONEY FOR "THE REVOLUTION" AND THAT IN TWO YEARS THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT BY FORCE OF ARMS.

5. MILITARY SOURCES LATER REVEALED THAT THEY BELIEVED THIS MOST RECENT OPERATION TO BE A TRAINING GRADUATION EXERCISE MUCH LIKE THE PUERTO RICO RAID.

6. COMMENT: THE ORGANIZATION, THE EQUIPMENT, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY THE NUMBERS OF GUERRILLAS INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION ARE SIGNIFICANT. (A SECOND WITNESS CLAIMED THE GROUP OF GUERRILLAS NUMBERED 1000). IF, AS BELIEVED BY THE MILITARY, THE RAID ON URIBE AND THE KIDNAPPING OF ARCHIBALD WERE PART OF ANOTHER GRADUATION EXERCISE LIKE THE RAID ON PUERTO RICO, WHICH INVOLVED 250 GUERRILLAS, IT COULD MEAN THAT THE GUERRILLAS IN THE GENERAL AREA OF META AND CAQUETA HAVE GREATLY INCREASED THEIR RECRUITMENT CAPABILITY. THE LARGE NUMBER AND STANDARDIZATION OF UNIFORMS AND ARMS, NO MATTER HOW OLD, INDICATE AN IMPROVED DEGREE OF ORGANIZATION AND PERHAPS AN EXPANDED LOGISTICAL BASE. FURTHERMORE, IF ARCHIBALD'S EYEWITNESS REPORT IS EVEN 50 PERCENT RELIABLE, OVERALL FIGURES FOR GUERRILLAS OPERATING IN COLOMBIA MUST BE REVISED

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 00628 211723Z

UPWARD FROM THE 500 WHICH IS NOW GENERALLY ACCEPTED. THE SLOWNESS OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMY'S RESPONSE AND THE FACT THAT THERE HAS NOT YET BEEN SIGNIFICANT CONTACT WITH SUCH A LARGE GUERRILLA FORCE BODES ILL FOR FUTURE ANTI-GUERRILLA OPERATIONS. IN THE MEANTIME, NEWSPAPERS HAVE NOT PROVIDED FOLLOW-UP COVERAGE TO THE GUERRILLA RAID, INDICATING THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS KEEPING A TIGHT LID ON THE INCIDENT. IN FACT, THE COMMANDER OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMY WENT AHEAD WITH A PUBLIC STATEMENT ON JAN 19 TO THE

EFFECT THAT SUBVERSIVE MOVEMENTS HAVE DIMINISHED IN THE WAKE OF
RECENT ACTIONS BY SECURITY FORCES.
VAKY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, PARAMILITARY FORCES, COMMUNISTS, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BOGOTA00628
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760023-1026
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760136/aaaabfer.tel
Line Count: 118
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUL 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <26 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LATEST KIDNAPPING LEADS TO REVELATION OF POSSIBLE BUERRILLA GAINS
TAGS: PINS, PORS, MILI, CO, (ARCHIBALD, FRED)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006